# WebBuyer

SITE REVIEWS

## SITE REVIEWS FOR ONLINE SHOPPING

BY KEVIN SAVETZ

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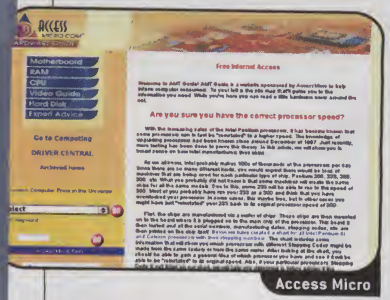
## PC SHOPPING

The sites in this listing sell computers, components, and accessories from multiple manufacturers. See the sites under "PC Direct Vendors," or check the *Computer Shopper* Source Directory ***(cgi.zdnet.com/slink?8145)*** for more information on PC manufacturers offering only their own brands (such as Dell and Gateway).

### aberdeeninc.com

Targeting the savvy consumer who craves speeds and feeds, **Aberdeen** offers extensive specs on a wide variety of computers and accessories. Shoppers can see side-by-side comparisons of motherboards the company carries.




### accessmicro.com

Need a gift for that special someone who has everything? Check out **Access Micro,** which stocks tons of items ranging from T1 routers to complete desktop systems. The help desk and hardware guide provide aid to first-time visitors, and the clearance area offers returned items and old inventory for below wholesale cost.

### www.applied-computer.com

Selling PCs and supplies since 1984, **Applied Computer** promises to beat any advertised price. The company features an 80,000-product inventory—check the site's list of the 1,000 most popular ones. Beware of the handling fee tacked onto orders under $200.

### blackbox.com

Get connected! Specializing in network products, **Black Box's** extensive 900-page catalog of storage, cabling, and surge-protection products—plus other connectivity accessories—can be viewed online or off.

### buy.com

Among the products offered on this monstrous, multifaceted site are computers, electronics, books, and movies. **Buy.com** sells a whopping 850,000 items and offers a price-matching policy on most of them.

COMPUTER SHOPPER

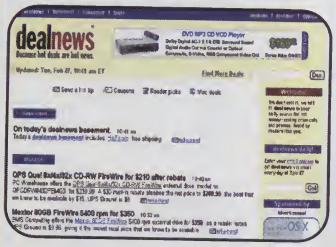
**site OF THE month**

MAY

### dealnews.com

Deal yourself in! A lot of sites highlight shopping deals around the Net, but **Dealnews** is head and shoulders above the rest. The site is an independent buyer's guide that reports on low-price deals from Web stores and, occasionally, retail merchants.

Much of the site's success can be attributed to the visitors themselves, who share the deals that they unearth. The offers they discover range from tempting (for instance, we found a 19-inch monitor for $253) to nearly impossible to turn down. (How about a new scanner for $15, or a free spindle of CD-Rs?)




Updated daily, Dealnews focuses primarily on computer products, arranged in categories such as storage, peripherals, and software. The site also offers a smattering of nontech categories, such as movies, travel, and home products. Check the Top Reader Picks list to see the most popular offers.

The best deals can often be found in the Dealnews Basement, which lists products without manufacturer warranties. Often refurbished and without available technical support, these products should be left to the most frugal—and adventurous—shoppers.

Dealnews' two sister sites are also worth a look. **Dealmac** ***(www.dealmac.com)*** offers the same features, but focuses exclusively on Macintosh products. And **Dealchat** ***(www.dealchat.com)*** is a message board for discussing the Net's best steals and too-good-to-be-true deals.

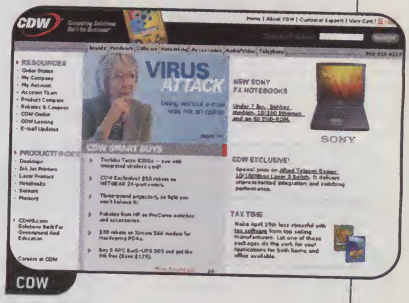
RECENT WINNERS

APRIL

CyberRebate.com.....*www.cyberrebate.com*

MARCH

CD Post .....*www.cdpost.com*




### cdw.com

**CDW** offers an enormous array of hardware and software. Create side-by-side comparisons in many product categories, and search out dollar-saving deals on the rebates-and-coupons page.

### compgeeks.com

Revenge of the nerds, indeed! Shop the **Computer Geeks Discount Outlet** for new, discontinued, and refurbished computer gear. It's a trove for the do-it-yourselfer piecing together a desktop system. The site features low prices and complete specs on every product.

### compuplus.com

**Comp-U-Plus** offers top-of-the-line customer service, including a 30-day money-back guarantee and free technical support. Its catalog isn't earth-shattering in scope, but plenty of name brands are represented, and prices are reasonable.

### compusa.com

The well-organized **CompUSA** rounds out the usual selection of PC hardware, peripherals, and accessories with areas devoted to electronics and gadgets. The frugal won't want to overlook the site's outlet section.

### computergate.com

In business since 1991, **Computer Gate** offers a 30-day satisfaction return policy on its products, which include peripherals and built-to-order PCs. Check out the Quick Index: You'll never have to poke around for the right product again.

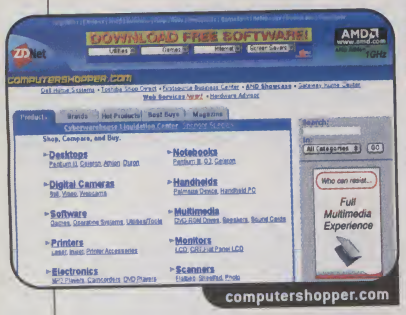
### computers4sure.com

The 19 well-stocked departments at **Computers4Sure.com** include networking equipment, projectors, PDAs, scanners, and more. Bargain hunters can quickly sniff out deals on the Special Offers and Clearance pages.

SITE REVIEWS

## computershopper.com

*Computer Shopper's* own piece of cyberspace, **computershopper.com,** provides access to product reviews, interactive guides to choosing a desktop or a notebook, and How to Buy sections for the most popular product categories.




## www.computersurplusoutlet.com

You're just crazy enough to build your own desktop system, aren't you? Then you'll feel right at home at **Computer Surplus Outlet,** where you'll find closeouts, overstocks, refurbished equipment, and liquidation items. You can even stumble upon the occasional assembly-required Pentium system for less than $100.

## crucial.com

One of the largest providers of memory upgrades on the Web, **Crucial Technology** offers nearly 50,000 upgrade options for 10,000 computer systems. The site's Memory Selector helps buyers find the right product, and the company backs its memory with a lifetime warranty.

## cyberrebate.com

Every product at **CyberRebate.com** comes with a rebate. The diverse catalog includes computer hardware, electronics, health and beauty items, and toys. Thousands of products have a 100 percent rebate, making them free—but you'll have to wait about 14 weeks for the rebate check.

## cyberwarehouse.com

If you can't pass up a bargain-basement sale (and don't mind waiting a few days for your item to ship), **CyberWarehouse** is definitely for you. The site offers a small selection of PCs, monitors, and peripherals.

## dalco.com

**Dalco Electronics** stocks everything from motherboards to monitors, ships them the day you order, and includes a 30-day guarantee. Bargain hunters will want to start with the specials found on the home page, which change regularly.

## dartek.com

With a roster of more than 100,000 products, **Dartek** peddles an impressive selection of hardware, software, networking equipment, and office furniture. Well-designed features include printable spec sheets, customers' product ratings, a product-watch feature, and a frequent-buyers' club.

## dirtcheapdrives.com

If you can store data on it, this site sells it. **Dirt Cheap Drives** offers hard drives, CD-ROM and DVD hardware, and drive arrays, with detailed technical information about each product. This decade-old company also stocks mounting kits, media, and accessories.

## www.discmarket.com

CD duplication is the name of the game at **The Disc Market.** The site sells CD duplicators and CD printers, as well as a wide variety of blank CD-Rs. Plus, you'll find jewel boxes, sleeves, and other jackets for CD storage and mailing.

## ecost.com

The **eCost.com** catalog spans the full range of PC hardware and software, including ready-to-use systems, peripherals, accessories, and applications. The site features personalized product recommendations and fastidious organization.

## egghead.com

**Egghead.com** shoppers can browse the site's hardware, software, office-product, and electronics superstores. Corporate users will find volume pricing, leasing information, and software licensing in the business center.

## electrified.com

Need a serious bargain? **Electrified Discounters** specializes in products that are discontinued, second-inventory, refurbished, off-lease, or otherwise past their prime. Systems range from new Pentium II laptops to under-$200 used 486s. (Wear your sunglasses, however—this site is so garish it can be difficult to navigate.)

## www.firstsource.com

Focused on the technology needs of businesses, **Firstsource** offers a broad range of choices in computer hardware, rack-mount systems, network tools, phone systems, wiring, and software.

## globalcomputer.com

**Global Computer Supplies** features same-day shipping on a Godzilla-size selection of PC components, accessories, software, furniture, and media. "Showrooms" highlight products from featured manufacturers. Watch out for the 15 percent restocking fee on nondefective returns, though.

## gogocity.com

You'd think **GoGoCity.com** would be the one-stop shop for knee-high boots, hot pants, and all things "gogo." Not so fast, slick. This site actually features desktop and notebook computers, peripherals, software, and accessories. The strangely diverse product categories also include children's items and interior-decoration products.

## insight.com

With more than 110,000 items for sale, **Insight** offers an impressive catalog of hardware and software. Customized sites are available for shoppers in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Germany.

## www.jandr.com

Hardware, software, home-office products, and appliances abound at **J&R Computer World,** the New York City-based superstore famed for its selection and, ahem, "brusque" service. Avoid the attitude with this online version, which specializes in cameras—both digital and traditional film models. Product help is available via e-mail, online chat, and phone.

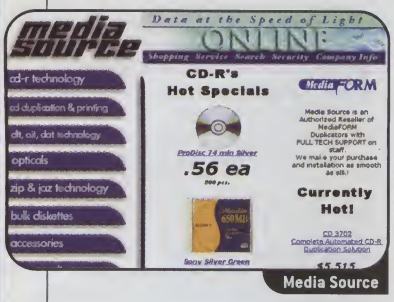
## laptoptravel.com

**Laptop Travel** is road-warrior heaven! The site sells portable-computing and international-travel gear, including electrical adapters, modem converters/couplers, and security accessories. You'll find traditional and "camouflaged" laptop carrying cases, laptop RAM, and storage add-ons.

## SITE REVIEWS

### mcglen.com

**McGlen Micro's** specialized searches can help you find memory and other accessories compatible with your computer, printer, or copier. With the Build-To-Order Configurator, shoppers can design a custom system, which the company will configure and ship to you in two days.



Media Source

### mediasourceinc.com

**Media Source** is obsessed with storage media. This single-minded site sells CD-Rs, bulk floppies, optical discs, Zip disks, Jaz disks, DATs, and tons more. The selection of writable CDs includes brand-name and generic disks, business-card CD-Rs, and printable media.

### megahaus.com

**MegaHaus** bills itself the "drive authority," offering a wide variety of storage solutions, including hard drives, DVD drives, RAID arrays, and CD-mastering products.

### mei-microcenter.com

**MEI-Micro Center** offers new and refurbished desktops from Compaq, eMachines, Hewlett-Packard, and PowerSpec. You'll also find a small selection of peripherals. Rummage through the bargain bin for deals on closeouts, refurbished units, and overstocks.

MEI-Micro Center

### memman.com

All of the desktop and laptop memory sold at **Memory Man** carries a lifetime warranty, and the site's reference guide offers RAM-configuration info for all name-brand computers. The site also sells processors, motherboards, hard drives, heat sinks, and more for intrepid system builders.

### memory4less.com

**Memory4Less.com** offers low prices on a wide variety of RAM, including older types you may have been pulling your hair out to find. If you don't know the memory requirements of your computer or digital camera, this site will clue you in.

### microx-press.com

**MicroX-Press** offers detailed information about most products, as well as a handy feature that will send you an e-mail whenever a product's price drops below a limit you set. Customers are invited to rate and review products they've tried.

### www.mobile-mania.com

Don't freak out, kids! Cut back on the sugar intake, and head over to **Mobilemania.com,** where digital cameras, e-mail devices, PDAs, cases, and adapters of all sorts are available for folks on the go.

### mobileplanet.com

**MobilePlanet** is home to a gaggle of high-tech tools and toys for mobile professionals. The selection includes handheld and notebook computers, PDAs, wireless-communication products, and travel-size printers and scanners.

### motherboards.com

With a wide selection of motherboards from nine manufacturers, do-it-yourselfers can handpick the perfect innards for their new PCs at **Motherboards.com.** Customers can post product reviews, dinging those models that just don't live up to the hype.

### www.mwave.com

In addition to PC systems and peripherals, **Multiwave Direct** stocks notebook accessories, videoconferencing equipment, and network tools. Top sellers, "blowout specials," and rebate forms are a click away from the home page.

### neutronet.com

**Neutron** carries thousands of computer systems and peripherals from nearly 400 manufacturers and distributors. A handy toolbox offers easy access to best buys, help for first-time buyers, and a massive manufacturer directory.

### notebooksuperstore.com

Devoted exclusively to portable computers, **NotebookSuperStore.com** sells more than 100 different laptop models from nine manufacturers. You'll see technical details about each model, and a comparison tool helps you zero in on the best portable for your needs.

### onvia.com

**Onvia.com,** a business-to-business computer outlet, offers a handful of features that distinguish it as a small-business resource, including a services marketplace, buying guides, and active community forums.

### outpost.com

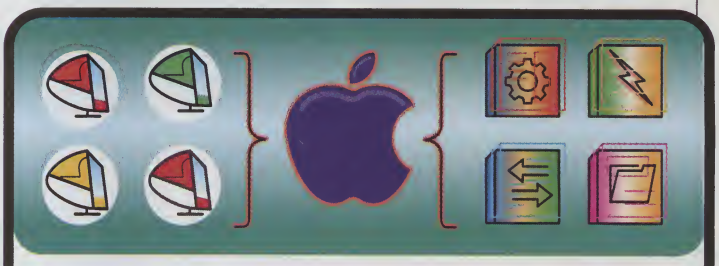
**Outpost.com** offers free overnight delivery on orders over $100, and flat-rate delivery on smaller orders. The site sells a wide selection of computer hardware and software, personal electronics, and office products.

### palmgear.com

Users of handhelds will appreciate the extensive selection of free and commercial programs downloadable from **PalmGear HQ.** Shoppers can buy PDA hardware and accessories, including carrying cases and hip, fashion-forward styli. Sign up for an e-mailing list to receive information about new software, news, and user tips.

### pcconnection.com

**PC Connection** offers nifty bargains on a colossal variety of PC and Macintosh products. Smart Selectors ease the searching process for shoppers looking for turnkey systems, cameras, printers, monitors, or memory to fit specific guidelines.



## MACINTOSH HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

### www.club-mac.com

Join the club! **ClubMac's** selection of Macintosh hardware, peripherals, and software is hard to beat. Click the tabs to zoom in on USB or IEEE 1394 (FireWire) add-ons, then pick your Mac model from the menu for a list of compatible RAM.

### hyperarchive.lcs.mit.edu

The **Info-Mac HyperArchive** isn't the prettiest site on the Net, but it is the definitive trove for Macintosh shareware and freeware. Files are painstakingly categorized, and each download includes a descriptive abstract, usually written by the programmer.

### macworks.com

**MacWorks** sells new and refurbished Macintosh computers, peripherals, and accessories. You can get a sleek new G4 Cube, or a logic-board upgrade for your older Mac. The Clearance Items page offers odds and ends any Mac addict would love.

### smalldog.com

**Small Dog Electronics** sells new, used, and refurbished Macintosh computers and accessories. The computer selection consists primarily of speedy G4 systems and iMacs, but budget shoppers will find very inexpensive older models.

ILLUSTRATION BY HANK OSUNA

SITE REVIEWS

## pcmall.com

Shoppers at **PC Mall** receive free lifetime technical support on the site's vast selection of computers, hardware, and software. The site's business-solutions forum offers corporate leasing and volume pricing. Apple-heads can find all their favorite Macintosh products at the **Mac Mall** sister site ***(www.macmall.com)***.

## pczone.com

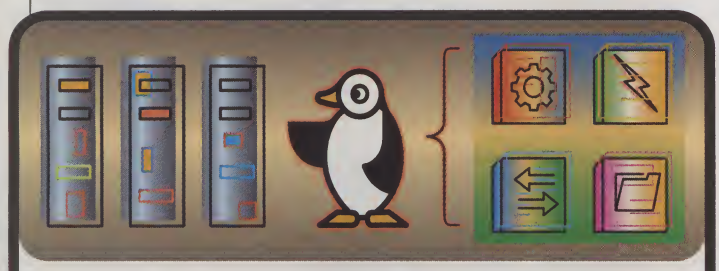
**PC Zone** carries an impressive selection of all things PC. You'll find links to a clearance area and other stores: **Mac Zone** and **Electronics Zone.** Printable rebate coupons can save you some cash.

## provantage.com

**Provantage** offers PC products from more than 1,000 manufacturers, including a large selection of books and training materials. The site's Personal Tracking List feature lets customers build a list of product bookmarks, then monitor prices and availability.

## shopper.cnet.com

The **CNET Shopper** search engine takes the guesswork out of finding a deal on hardware, software, and accessories. The site tracks the prices of more than 200,000 products in 100 stores. (CNET Networks is *Computer Shopper's* parent company.)



## LINUX HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

### elinux.com

Seek and ye shall find at **eLinux,** which features 42,000 hardware and software products. The site is so serious about Linux, many of its desktop and notebook systems don't come bundled with that "other" OS. Features include Linux news and a community forum.

### lhd.zdnet.com

Will that beautiful new laptop run Linux? How about that bargain-basement peripheral? Find out with the **ZDNet Linux Hardware Guide.** Here, users share their experiences regarding which hardware works with Linux (and which doesn't). If it does, you can download a compatible driver and put it to work. (ZDNet is owned by CNET Networks, *Computer Shopper's* parent company.)

### linuxcentral.com

Linux-friendly hardware, commercial software, and operating system CD-ROMs are in stock at **Linux Central.** Plus, you'll find a selection of Linux-touting T-shirts, hats, and ties so you can show off your alternative tendencies in public.

### linuxmall.com

Visit a mall filled with fun-loving penguins. **LinuxMall.com** peddles Linux-ready hardware, software, and books. You can also choose from various versions of Linux on CD-ROM for quick and painless installation.

### thelinuxstore.com

**TheLinuxStore** carries a small selection of hardware and software that's compatible with the popular alternative operating system. In the community area you'll find Linux news, free downloads, and Web links.

## shoppingplanet.com

Do-it-yourselfers will appreciate **Shopping Planet's** inventory of barebones systems, add-on cards, and kits. A section of the site specializing in software and hardware for the Linux operating system is available at ***www.shoppingplanet.com/cm/linux.asp.***

## sparco.com

Looking for that something extra? Check out **Sparco.com's** list of products that come bundled with "free stuff." The site stocks more than 130,000 products, and it offers a list of discounted items for students and faculty members of academic institutions.

## spidergear.com

**SpiderGear** offers new and refurbished computers, cameras, home audio and video products, and car audio items and appliances. A $10 optional membership entitles you to reduced prices and an annual rebate.

## www.ssdonline.com

At **State Street Direct,** shoppers will discover a huge selection of computers and imaging products. Digital-camera shoppers will find many items of interest, including a gallery for comparing images taken with various cameras.

## staples.com

Yeah, they got that. **Staples'** Web site offers a liberal price-matching policy on computer accessories, software, and office supplies. If you order similar items often, you can set up personalized shopping lists. The company can occasionally take its time shipping items out to you, though, so beware.

## 2for1inkjet.com

Searching for incredible deals on printing supplies? Check out **2 For 1 Inkjet,** which offers two-for-one prices on toner and ink cartridges for every brand of inkjet and laser printer, copier, and fax machine. The company offers free shipping on larger orders.

## 3re.com

If you can tolerate hand-me-downs to save some bucks, check out **3Re.com,** which repairs and repackages factory-returned computers and electronic equipment. Offerings include desktops, notebooks, printers, monitors, network equipment, and software.

## tccomputers.com

In business since 1988, **TC Computers** sells fully configured systems, motherboards, and name-brand peripherals. The company's specialty is motherboards; buyers can choose to have motherboards and processors preassembled and tested for no extra charge.

## tcwo.com

**Thompson's Computer Warehouse Outlet Center** offers only a small selection of computer products. You may find only a dozen monitors or four CD-ROM drives, but the prices are fantastic.

## techstore.com

**TechStore.com** offers hardware in dozens of categories and highlights monthly top sellers. The site also sells a wide range of software—everything from Microsoft productivity suites to children's titles.

## thortek.com

A wide array of computer accessories awaits **ThorTek** shoppers. The site provides quick links to the "top 5" products in several categories, including hard drives, monitors, digital cameras, and CD-RW drives.

## tigerdirect.com

**TigerDirect's** site offers 46,000 products, including custom-built computers that are tested and shipped within 48 hours. Up for a little adventure? Order a build-it-yourself custom PC kit, and let the fun begin!

## truedataonline.com

**True Data Technology** stocks an exceptional catalog of motherboards, hard drives, and other upgrades. The site also features communication essentials for businesses, including DSL equipment and telephony products.

## www.usbstuff.com

**USB Stuff** specializes in Universal Serial Bus-equipped gadgets, including

ILLUSTRATION BY HANK OSUNA

digital cameras, CD-RW drives, printers, modems, hubs, and input devices. Uh-oh: Poor site design makes navigation difficult. A sister site at ***www.firewirestuff.com*** stocks IEEE 1394-compatible hardware.

USB Stuff

### usedcomputer.com

**Used Computer Mall** is a marketplace for, you guessed it, used computer equipment. Shoppers can list hardware to sell, or look for items to buy using the free classified ads. The site will also help you appraise equipment.

### warehouse.com

The four "warehouses" under **MicroWarehouse's** roof sell PC hardware, Mac products, datacomm components, and supplies. The site accepts corporate, educational, and government accounts, and offers business leases on many products.

## PC DIRECT VENDORS

### www.alienware.com

**Alienware** won't abduct your pets, but the company can build you a high-end gaming machine, desktop video system, or high-performance workstation. Cases are available in a rainbow of out-of-this-world colors.

### buyabs.com

Exceptional customer support on custom-configured desktop and notebook systems is the goal at **ABS Computer Technologies.** All systems include a 30-day money-back guarantee. Some computers are available with Linux preinstalled.

### buy-atlas.com

**Atlas Micro** offers desktop PCs built around Pentium, Celeron, and AMD processors. Buyers can use drop-down menus to build a custom configuration and are protected by a reasonable 30-day return policy.

### compaq.com

Three arms of **Compaq Computer's** site offer computers for everyone. See the Compaq AtHome division ***(athome.compaq.com)*** for home and home-office systems, DirectPlus ***(www.directplus.compaq.com)*** for business PCs and servers, or the Compaq Factory Outlet Superstore ***(compaqfactoryoutlet.com)*** for big bargains. The site allows shoppers to test-drive Compaq systems running various operating systems.

### csd.toshiba.com

Here's the Web home for **Toshiba's** stylish portables and desktop systems. The site's build-to-order system doesn't offer as many options as some other sites do, but it does offer plenty of extended-warranty and lease options.

## SITE REVIEWS

### cyberpowerinc.com

Each **CyberPower** PC includes a three-year warranty and 30-day money-back guarantee. The site's service area includes downloadable drivers and lifetime tech support.

### dell.com

**Dell Computer's** electronic storefront has always led the way in terms of ease of use. The site is jam-packed with detailed information that makes it a snap to match a machine to your needs. Each system is configurable to the nth degree via drop-down menus, and you can get quick access to online support customized for your PC.

### www.fosa.com

**Fosa's** built-to-order notebook computers include a 15-day money-back guarantee with no restocking fee and lifetime technical support. We just wish the site didn't depend so heavily on the Macromedia Flash plug-in. Sheesh!

### www.fujitsu-pc.com

**Fujitsu's** site focuses on portable computing, including notebook PCs and pen-based tablet computers. Each computer includes several warranty options. A trade-in program offers cash back on your old computer when you upgrade to certain models.

### gateway.com

One of the biggest players in online computer sales, **Gateway's** enormous and informative site sells custom-built desktops and portables, delivering them on time 98 percent of the time, according to BizRate.com.

### hpshopping.com

At this site, **Hewlett-Packard** sells its lines of desktop and notebook computers, handhelds, PDAs, digital cameras, and printers. Business leases are available, and the site makes repeat purchases easy for businesses and individuals.

### ibm.com/shop

**ShopIBM** sells business and home computers, notebooks, servers, thin clients, networking equipment, and peripherals. The build-to-order option allows buyers to customize a new desktop PC. Linux is an option on laptop models.

### idot.com

From low-cost budget models to powerful monster machines, **iDot** offers customized desktop and notebook computers with a good return policy.

iDot

### kaypro.com

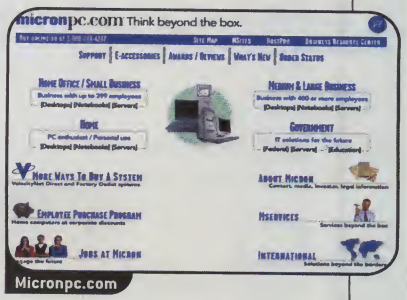
You can design your own Pentium desktop system at **Kaypro,** but the custom configurator doesn't offer as much flexibility as we'd like. The site's notebook area carries a selection of Fujitsu portables.

### microexpress.net

**Micro Express** offers built-to-order desktop and notebook computers featuring AMD and Intel processors. Each system includes a 30-day guarantee and a two- or four-year warranty. Business leases are available.

### micronpc.com

One of the largest direct PC vendors, **Micronpc.com** sells computers to home-office users, larger businesses, government buyers, and buyers outside the United States. The Factory Outlet offers refurbished and discontinued systems.



Micronpc.com

### www.mwmicro.com

Go MidWest, young man. **MidWest Micro** offers down-home, custom-configured desktops, servers, and notebook systems. The site's Service Center is exemplary, with a troubleshooting knowledge base and driver downloads that cater to your particular system.

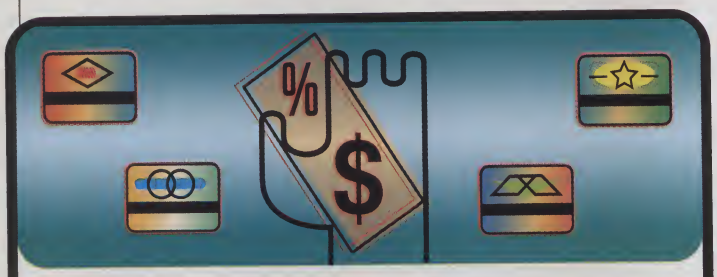
SITE REVIEWS

### nutrend.com

Custom-configure a home or business desktop PC at **NuTrend Computer Products.** The company stocks a wide selection of machines running your choice of Intel or AMD processors. Each system comes with a three-year warranty.

### www.polywell.com/onlinestore

**Polywell Computers** may not be a household name, but the company offers desktops, workstations, and servers that are worth a look. You'll find lots of custom-configuration options. You can even buy your system preloaded with three operating systems: Windows Me, Windows NT, and Linux.



## CREDIT AND CREDIT CARDS

### americanexpress.com/blue

The first "smart" credit card to be offered in the United States, the **American Express Blue** card is embedded with a chip that, combined with a special card reader that hooks to your PC, increases security for online transactions. Paperless billing allows you to receive and pay bills online.

### asque.com/credcard.htm

Which credit card is right for you? Check the **Credit Card Rates Guide,** a database of 225 cards. Sort them by lowest fees, best introductory rates, and geographic availability, or look for cards offering special features like frequent-flyer miles.

### bankrate.com/brm/rate/cc_home.asp

**Bankrate.com** is a must-visit site if you're shopping around for a credit card. Tell the site your priority—such as best deals for balance transfers or cash advances—and it will build a customized list of cards that suit your needs.

### cardweb.com

We'll give credit where it is due: **CardWeb.com** is a fantastic site, offering info on card rates, tips on choosing and using credit cards, and news of interest to anyone who uses plastic. Take your questions to the message board for expert answers.

### creditinfocenter.com

The **Credit Info Center** is home to tons of information about credit, including tips on repairing your credit, protecting yourself from identity theft, and understanding credit reports.

### www.pocketcard.com

**PocketCard** is a debit card for teens. Parents preload the card with money online, and the juvenile cardholder can spend the money online or off. When kids use the card to make a purchase, parents receive instant e-mail notification.

### qspace.com

Check your credit report at **QSpace.com.** Get an instant credit report online (including your "personal credit score," information that was hidden from consumers until recently) for $11.90, or a comprehensive report by mail for $29.95.

### sagernotebook.com

Specializing in notebook computers, **Sager** offers a variety of options, from budget machines to speedy multimedia units. Service includes a 72-hour repair-turnaround guarantee and lifetime free tech support. Business leases are available.

### shopprostar.com

Each computer in **ProStar Computer's** line of notebook PCs is backed by a 30-day money-back guarantee, a speedy-repair promise, and free tech support. The handy comparison tool helps buyers zero in on the best model for their needs.

### sonystyle.com

**SonyStyle** sells Sony's line of VAIO desktops and notebooks, plus digital cameras, displays, and storage devices. The Xtras Direct section of the site carries add-ons for PCs, digital cameras, and other equipment.

### store.apple.com

**Apple Computer's** online store looks just like an iMac, all shiny and clean. This well-designed site allows you to custom-configure any Macintosh computer and offers a wide array of Mac-compatible software and accessories. Beware the one-click ordering feature, however—using it may be a bit too convenient for impulse buyers!

### www.tiny.com

Britain's favorite direct computer seller is now targeting us Yanks. **Tiny Computers'** line of prebuilt desktop and notebook PCs includes models for professionals and first-time buyers.

### unitedmicro.com

**United Micro** offers a unique degree of configurability with its desktop and server PCs. Choosy shoppers can, for instance, pick the motherboard model and brand of cooling fan. You can see pictures of each component before you build the system.

### www.winbook.com

Focusing exclusively on portables, **WinBook Computer** offers machines with a 30-day money-back guarantee, a one-year warranty, and free technical support. Ironically, some of the site's best deals, the daily "Web specials," can only be ordered by phone.

### xicomputer.com

**Xi Computer** offers high-performance workstations for CAD professionals, Linux aficionados, and other power users. Desktops feature your choice of Intel or AMD processors, including powerful gigahertz and dual-processor systems.

## PC RESOURCES

### cablemodeminfo.com

**CableModemInfo.com** serves up reviews of cable-modem and DSL hardware, plus tips on sharing a modem between PCs. The site can help you find a cable-ready ISP in your area.

### dailyedeals.com

**DailyeDeals'** coupon pages offer codes that will instantly shave $5 to $40 off the bottom line at major online retailers. The First Time area links to substantial discounts for first-time customers.

### dcresource.com

The **Digital Camera Resource Page** is an unbiased, comprehensive source of information for digital-camera buyers and owners. Shoppers can glean necessary info from the FAQ page, buyer's guide, message boards, and reviews.

### dealtime.com

**DealTime.com** is an independent comparison-shopping service. The site aggregates prices from hundreds of online merchants, auctions, and classified sites. Also, 21st-century shoppers can compare prices by cell phone or wireless PDA, thanks to the site's mobile service.

### www.epubliceye.com

Watchdog **ePublicEye.com** serves up a rating site that helps shoppers choose online businesses that deliver the best customer service. Available in six languages, the site employs "secret shoppers" who patronize Internet businesses, conducting audits and rating the service of each.

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SITE REVIEWS

## expertcity.com

**Expertcity.com** promises live, 24-hour computer assistance from real human beings. When you pose a question, experts across the Internet bid for your business. Read their profiles, compare prices, then choose the expert you like.

## 56k.com

See **56K.com** for a primer on 56kbps modems, a price shopper for buying a modem at the best price, and downloads of the latest firmware. Read the special report on the new V.92 modems.

## www.ftc.gov

The **Federal Trade Commission's** Web site is packed with useful information about consumer fraud and how to avoid it—online and off. Articles address online auctions and how to protect yourself when shopping on the Net.

## gomez.com

**Gómez.com** offers ratings and customer reviews of e-commerce sites in two dozen categories, ranging from Web-based computer stores to drugstores, apparel vendors to online brokers. Check the ratings on ease of use, customer confidence, and cost.

## motherboards.org

**Motherboard HomeWorld** is packed with motherboard news, reviews, specifications, and tips. Its comprehensive database of 1,200 products includes driver information, technical details, and overclocking hints.

## nextag.com

**NexTag** is a sophisticated buying service that can help frugal shoppers find the lowest possible prices on computer equipment, electronics, books, music, and videos. Entering your ZIP code allows NexTag to calculate shipping and tax for accurate pricing.

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## pdastreet.com

**PDAStreet.com,** a resource for users of Palm, Windows CE, Psion, and Visor personal digital assistants, offers message boards, software downloads, news, and product reviews.

## pricepda.com

**PricePDA.com** is a price-comparison engine for buyers of personal digital assistants, accessories, and software. Users can access the site anywhere via WAP-enabled cell phones.

## rammatters.com

**RAM Matters** humorously explains how adding memory to your computer will make you more productive. You'll get help in determining the type of memory your computer requires, as well as installation tips.

## scambusters.com

Busted! **Internet ScamBusters** is a site and newsletter aiming to help Net users avoid getting cheated. Each newsletter focuses on the latest scams to make the rounds.

## techsupportalert.com

Help! I need somebody! **Tech Support Alert** helps computer users locate the best technical-support information on the Net. You'll find reviews of free and pay-for-support sites, plus how-to guides for Windows users.

## usb.org

Check **USB.org** for technical information about the Universal Serial Bus, as well as answers to frequently asked questions and information about devices that use it. You'll find information for end users as well as developers.

## windrivers.com

**WinDrivers.com** is a comprehensive archive of drivers and DLL files for hard drives, sound cards, scanners, and other hardware. The site also provides links to antivirus updates and BIOS upgrades.

# SOFTWARE SITES

## accountingshop.com

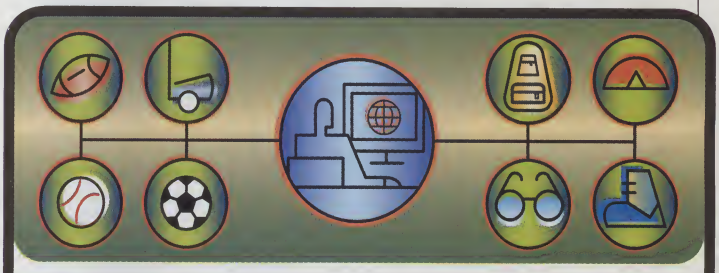
The **Accounting Shop** focuses on accounting software. Shoppers can choose from an extensive catalog of high-end, midrange, and small-business packages, and get rebates when upgrading from QuickBooks or Peachtree software.

## atomicpark.com

**AtomicPark.com** specializes in business software, offering free shipping on all orders. Categories include voice-recognition software and fax apps.

## beyond.com

**Beyond.com** presents software for PC, Mac, and PDA users. In addition to traditional boxed titles, the site sells downloadable software from major publishers and a respectable selection of computer hardware. (CNET Networks, *Computer Shopper's*



# SPORTS AND OUTDOOR PRODUCTS

## fogdog.com

Sports enthusiasts will appreciate **Fogdog,** a site that carries countless sporting goods, including equipment, apparel, and sports-medicine items. Just choose your game—from badminton to wakeboarding—to see the appropriate gear. A group-sales area has custom uniforms and equipment for schools and leagues.

## www.gigagolf.com

Golf lovers will want to putt on over to **GigaGolf,** which builds customized clubs with the head, grip, and shaft of your choice.

## kid-e-sport.com

Kids just wanna have fun, and **Kid-e-Sport** wants to help. This site sells kid-size sporting goods. From martial arts to gymnastics to tennis, the company's got the gear for your little enthusiasts. The Learning Center section has 1,500 articles and lessons related to kids and sports.

## nashbar.com

**Bike Nashbar** will make biking fanatics salivate—the site offers every conceivable gadget for tricking out your bicycle. The selection includes clothing, helmets, and countless parts for fix-it-yourselfers.

## rei.com

Camping, hiking, climbing, and paddling—whatever your passion, **REI** sells sports gear and goods for you. This Web store's diverse selection includes everything from vehicle racks to casual dresses. The outlet area, **Rei-Outlet.com,** offers fantastic prices on name-brand merchandise.

## sportchalet.com

You got game? **Sport Chalet** sells gear and accessories for innumerable sports and fitness activities. The catalog includes extreme sports, in-line skating, and golf, among other categories. Also check in for buyer's guides, sizing charts, and pro tips.

## www.sportsmansguide.com

Covering camping, archery, hunting, and fishing, **The Sportsman's Guide** sells the paraphernalia you'll need for your next outdoor trek, as well as government-surplus merchandise. In business for more than 30 years, the company backs sales with a satisfaction guarantee.

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SITE REVIEWS

parent company, is an investor in Beyond.com.)

### bigclearance.com

You don't have to pay big money for a big box of big-name software. **BigClearance.com** sells "current version software at clearance prices," most with free shipping. The site carries a smallish selection of titles from Borland, Intuit, Macromedia, Microsoft, and other major publishers.

### buycheapsoftware.com

The name sums it up. **Buy Cheap Software** offers a relatively small selection—about 300 titles—at deep discounts. The site does sell programs from well-known publishers, including Adobe, Corel, Lotus, and Microsoft.

### buyonet.com

**Buyonet** specializes in downloadable commercial software. Hundreds of business applications, utilities, and games are available for download. For a nominal fee, shoppers can order a CD backup of purchased titles.

### chumbo.com

In addition to tons of Windows, PDA, and Mac programs, **Chumbo.com** features a Linux Store that sells applications for the popular alternative OS. You'll also find an array of DVD movies here.

### cws.internet.com

**Stroud's Consummate Winsock Applications List** is the ultimate one-stop download site for Internet software, including Web-development tools, browsers, and chat clients. You'll find comprehensive file lists, ratings, and extensive reviews. A free newsletter provides summaries of new software releases.

### download.cnet.com

**CNET Download.com** will help you find shareware and free software, linking to tens of thousands of PC, Mac, Linux, and PDA titles. Well-written newsletters and down-to-earth reviews help you to locate the perfect program. (CNET Networks is *Computer Shopper's* parent company.)

### ebworld.com

The online arm of the ubiquitous Electronics Boutique stores, **EBWorld.com** is a video-game player's paradise, offering 3,000 products. Its home page highlights new releases, coming-soon titles, and top sellers.

### freewarefiles.com

Windows users who want software without having to spend any money can start at **Freeware Files.com.** This site features quick links to the most popular giveaways.

### jumbo.com

**Jumbo** is the perfect name for this monstrous file archive, which features programs for sale, commercial-application demos, shareware, and freeware. Jumbo Guides offer articles on backing up, sharing MP3s, and other computing topics.

### mightyscholar.com

**Mighty Scholar** sells hand-picked educational software, categorized by age range and subject.

### 999central.com

The price is right at **999central.com,** which stocks 500 software and 200 DVD titles, most for $9.99. Educational, entertainment, and lifestyle applications are the most common. The site offers an ongoing "buy seven, get one free" deal.

### www.pdfstore.com

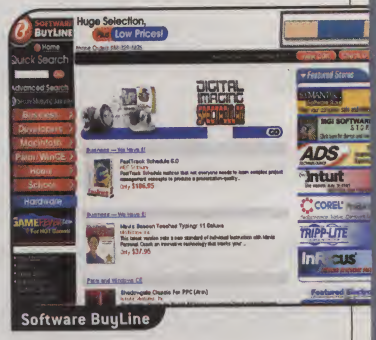
The **PDF Store** specializes in software for creating and working with Portable Document Format files, carrying a convenient, focused selection. The site sells shareware and commercial software for immediate download.

### soft4u.com

**Soft4U.com** specializes in software for businesses, resellers, schools, and government offices. The company offers same-day shipping on most software and highlights two daily specials at wholesale cost.

### softwarebuyline.com

**Software BuyLine** has a massive selection of software titles for Windows, Mac OS, Windows CE, and Palm OS. Shipping is free for orders of $50 or more. You'll also get easy access to product-rebate information.




### www.tucows.com

It's not just bovine bliss: **Tucows** is also an incredible archive of freeware and shareware. Plenty of local mirror sites keep downloads speedy. The category list and reviews make finding the software you seek a breeze.

### zdnet.com/downloads

Dude, you'll need more bandwidth. Download shareware, freeware, and demos from **ZDNet Downloads.** The site offers daily software highlights and quick links to the week's most popular software. Every program is rated, reviewed, and checked for viruses, so your new software won't come with any unpleasant surprises. (ZDNet is owned by CNET Networks, *Computer Shopper's* parent company.) ▼

## MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

### discountmagazines.com

Is your snail-mailbox perpetually empty? **DiscountMagazines.com** can cure that: Here you can get five one-year subscriptions for $5.95 each. The site is a bit less polished than some other subscription sites, but consider the money you're saving, and you'll get over it.

### enews.com

**Enews** sells subscriptions to more than 100,000 magazines, newspapers, and newsletters. Search for a particular title, browse by category, or check the most popular 'zines. Buy them for yourself or send one as a gift—including some from the great selection of computer magazines (hint, hint).

### foreignmedia.com

**News Express** offers 5,000 newspaper and magazine titles from around the world in a panoply of languages. In addition to traditional paper subscriptions, the site delivers newspapers electronically in PDF format through its Newsinform service. You can buy single issues or subscriptions.

### magazinecity.net

**MagazineCity.Net** guarantees the lowest subscription rates on the Net. Categories include Computers & Electronics, Trade & Professional Journals, and—ahem—Exotic Erotic. In addition to individual subscriptions, the site sells "special packages," groups of subscriptions on a particular topic (for instance, parenting or golfing) that can make unique gifts.

### magazineoutlet.com

**MagazineOutlet.com** sells subscriptions to 25,000 magazines. The company gives you the first two issues of every subscription for free, making it easy to try out new magazines without getting stuck with a whole year of duds.

### pch.com

We can't promise the prize van will come up your driveway, but **Publishers Clearinghouse's** Web site does promise to let you subscribe to popular magazines. The site also offers games, contests, freebie offers—and yes, you can enter the sweepstakes online.

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